

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SA/DDI - Mr. Komer

DATE: 16 April 1959

FROM : ONE/WE

22 May 59

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SUBJECT: Comment on Memorandum for the NSC Planning Board, "Political Implications of Afro-Asian Takeovers", dated 2 April 1959.

1. Page 3, Section B. I would recommend that paragraphs 4 and 5 be substantially reduced or perhaps discarded, letting paragraph 3 carry the argument as to why this paper concentrates on Free Asia. Paras. 4 and 5 puts too much emphasis on the correlation between authoritarianism and underdevelopment as the reason why this paper does not consider Latin America. In our last estimate, we pointed out that one of the major problems confronting Latin America is the fact that it is an underdeveloped area. Furthermore, while we did estimate that the trend in Latin America appeared to be away from military dictatorships, at the same time we pointed out that the military remains the deciding political force in most of these countries. Specifically with reference to paragraph 4, subparagraphs a, c, and e seem to have little relevance to the problem at hand namely, military rule. The first part of paragraph b has relevance but I don't see what anti-colonial racial biases have to do with the general argument.

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2. Page 5, Paragraphs 6 and 7. It seems to me that subparagraph "a" has little relevance to the logical construction which ends up with "thus" in paragraph "d". Since I agree with the main point in the paper, namely, that the advent of the military regime turns primarily on the capability of

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the particular government to cope with internal problems and has relatively little to do with the external relations of a particular country. I also believe that para. 7 is too definite about the trend toward military takeovers continuing. It seems to me that in much of this area the remaining civilian governments are more or less authoritarian and one might be hard put to argue that a replacement of a civilian authoritarian government with a military authoritarian government would make much difference. In this connection, I would indicate that the subject of subparagraph "d", that is the "second stage revolution", is applicable to both civilian authoritarian and military authoritarian governments.

3. Page 6, Section 2, "Short Range Policy Implications". This section should be redrafted to consider "Short Range Policy Implications". As it now stands paragraph 9 and the back end of paragraph 11 deal with long range policy implications. The middle section on "authoritarianism as the norm" refers to conditions favorable to military takeovers rather than the implications of such events. Subsection "B" ticks of the main arguments as to why authoritarianism is the way of political life in underdeveloped areas. But some apply to both civilian and military types and does not indicate any necessary judgment that military authoritarianism will replace the civilian form. It seems to me the point is well made in the first few sentence of paragraph 12 and it might be best to deemphasize short versus long range implications since the arguments in this paragraph apply both to the short and long run with equal validity.

- 2 -

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4. Page 10, Paragraph 13. Somehow this subparagraph seems out of place following so much discussion of authoritarianism being the norm to most of the countries of the area. I would suggest its deletion. With reference to subparagraph "c" I think some thought should be given to whether the US is opposed to all Communist developmental techniques (which are often difficult to distinguish between more acceptable socialist techniques) and whether the use of such techniques in fact tend to draw undeveloped countries within the communist "net" of experience and know-how. It certainly means they are appreciative of certain communist techniques for economic development but it is far from conclusive that there is a necessary correlation between this step and a political movement in the direction of closer ties with the communist world.

5. Page 11, Paragraph 14. This paragraph tends to put the choice between western and communist development techniques too much in a sense of black and white. In particular, the fifth sentence says that the leadership will keep trying to find some sort of an approach until acceptable development progress is made and then they will stop looking around for better or more effective approaches to their problems. It seems to me what we have seen on the part of the leadership of these countries is a continuing effort to solve their problems by whatever means appears most promising at the moment. Most of them use some sort of a mixture of capitalistic,

- 3 -

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socialistic, and communistic techniques, with all in incorporating native variations. In the last sentence of this paragraph, I think nationalism, as a barrier to the spread of Sino-Soviet Bloc influence, is played down too much (Estimate of the World Situation also makes this point).

6. Page 12, Paragraph 15. I would suggest deletion of paragraph 15 and put some of the points in a redrafted paragraph 14. The emphasis in the new paragraph would be on the near inevitability that most of these countries will, to greater or lesser degree, adopt methods which will be hardly be distinguishable between certain communist approaches. I would conclude the paragraph with the pitch made in subparagraph "c" that the US should be prepared to cooperate with these regimes.

7. Page 14, Paragraph 19. With reference to subparagraph "a", I see little connection between this point and the fact that we much continue to support and work effectively with military regimes. This seems to imply that where there is a real military threat it must be confronted by a militarily run state. There is also the other question as to whether the level of armaments in any of these countries has any correlation to Communist China's decision to attack. We have always estimated that the US willingness and capability to fight in a given area was the key.

8. Page 18, Paragraph 26. I would think it would be better if in this paragraph there was a little more flat-footed recognition of the lumps we are bound to take sooner or later in supporting the military regime.

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But this should be followed by the obvious statement that this must be lined with if the alternative is to allow the country to become more closely associated with the Bloc. In other words, you might try to minimize the "desire to be liked" idea which is implicit in some of the thinking in this and the following paragraphs. Moreover, it might be pointed out that the more we go about doing the things indicated in this and the following paragraphs, that is encouraging a military regime to do this, that, or the other thing, and giving it assistance, the more we will inevitably be associated with the militaristic regime.

- 5 -

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